

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-05 OES-06 DODE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7490

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 34361

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, MNUC, TECH, TH
SUBJ: EXPORT LICENSES FOR NUCLEAR REACTOR AND FUEL

REF: (A) STATE 170956, (B) BANGKOK 19725, (C) BANGKOK
25064, (D) STATE 302242, (E) BANGKOK 28495

1. EMBOFF HAS VISITED BANGKHEN SITE TO DISCUSS PROGRESS IN
PHYSICAL SECURITY UPGRADING WITH OAEP DIRECTOR GENERAL KRIVUTHI
SUKIJBUMRUNG. KRIVUTHI EXPLANIED UPGRADING HAD BEEN SLOW DUE
PRIMARILY TO BUDGETARY LIMITATIONS. STATUS REPORT FOLLOWS:

A. SECURITY FORCE: THE EIGHT MAN SECURITY FORCE IS STILL LARGELY
UNTRAINED, UNARMED AND POORLY PAID. A MINIMUM OF ONLY TWO
SECURITY GUARDS ARE ON DUTY AT ANY GIVEN TIME. OAEP'S REQUEST
FOR FY-77 FUNDS FOR TWO ADDITIONAL POSITIONS WAS REJECTED
BECAUSE THE POSITIONS HAD NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED IN THE BUDGET. A
FORMAL REQUEST HAS NOW BEEN MADE TO ESTABLISH THESE TWO NEW
POSITIONS AND FUNDS HOPEFULLY WILL BE PROVIDED IN THE FY 78
BUDGET WHICH WILL BE APPROVED IN OCTOBER OF 1977.

B. COLD FUEL STORAGE: A STEEL INNER DOOR WITH INSIDE HINGES
HAS BEEN INSTALLED BEHIND WOODEN DOOR. THE STEEL DOOR IS CONSTRUCTED
OF TWO STEEL PLATES, EACH 1/8 INCH THICK WELDED TO STEEL RIBS. A
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MECHANICAL ALARM SYSTEM HAS BEEN INSTALLED AND WILL BE ACTIVATED
WHEN MICRO SWITCHES ARE RECEIVED, PROBABLY BEFORE THE END OF
JANUARY. STORAGE OF COLD FUEL IS CHECKED ONCE A YEAR BY RTG
AND AGAIN ON ANNUAL IAEG INSPECTION.

C. REACTOR BUILDING ACCESS: THE BANGKHEN SITE HAS TWO SECURITY

ZONES WITH A 7-1/2 FOOT FENCE AND GATE MANNED BY THE SECURITY GUARD, SEPARATING THE REACTOR BUILDING (ZONE 2) FROM ADMINISTRATION, WORK SHOPS, ETC. (ZONE 1). VISITORS ARE PERMITTED ENTRY TO ZONE 2 WHEN ACCOMPANIED BY AUTHORIZED PERSONS. A RECEPTIONIST CONTROLS ACCESS TO THE REACTOR BUILDING DURING DUTY HOURS. A THREE-ZONE ALARM SYSTEM HAS BEEN INSTALLED AND WHEN IT BECOMES OPERATIVE, IT WILL MONITOR THE FUEL STORAGE AREA, THE REACTOR ROOM AND THE AIR LOCK CHAMBER AT THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE BUILDING DURING NON-DUTY HOURS. SIGNALS, INDICATING ENTRY, WILL BE RELAYED BY LIGHTS TO THE CONTROL ROOM INSIDE THE REACTOR ROOM AND BY LIGHTS AND SOUND TO THE SECURITY GUARD STATION AT THE GATE TO ZONE 2.

D. COMMUNICATION WITH POLICE: FREQUENCIES HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED BY THE POLICY AUTHORITIES FOR OAEP USE IN DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH POLICE. FUNDS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED IN CURRENT BUDGET AND OAEP IS CURRENTLY NEGOTIATING A PURCHASE OF TWO PORTABLE TRANSMITTERS-RECEIVERS AND RELATED EQUIPMENT.

E. PHYSICAL SECURITY DURING TRANSPORTATION OF NUCLEAR FUELS: POLICE AUTHORITIES HAVE ASSURED OAEP OF FULL COOPERATION AND SUPPORT IN PROVIDING SECURITY FOR TRANSFER OF FUELS FROM AIRPORT TO BANGKHEN. SPECIFIC PLANS WILL HAVE TO AWAIT SHIPPING NOTICE PROVIDING DETAILS OF SHIPMENT.

2. OAEP, ON CID'S RECOMMENDATION, PLANS TO EXTEND ITS 7-1/2 FOOT FENCE ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE SITE FROM ITS TERMINAL POINT TO THE PROPERTY LINE AT THE FRONT. TWO EXTERIOR LIGHTS HAVE BEEN INSTALLED TO ILLUMINATE THE REAR OF THE REACTOR BUILDING.

3. THE TRIGA MARK III REACTOR WILL REPLACE THE CURTIS-WRIGHT
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REACTOR IN OAEP'S RESEARCH OPERATIONS. THE CURTIS-WRIGHT REACTOR, HOWEVER, WILL BE RETAINED FOR TRAINING PURPOSES AND IS TO BE REINSTALLED IN THE REACTOR SPENT FUEL POOL.

4. COMMENT: EMBASSY CONCLUDES RTG IS MAKING SINCERE EFFORT UPGRADE SECURITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH ERDA TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS. WHILE UPGRADE IS UNDER WAY PROGRESS IS SLOW AND COMPLETION DATE IS UNCERTAIN. WE BELIEVE THAI WILL EVENTUALLY BUDGET NECESSARY FUNDS FOR COMPLETION OF PHYSICAL SECURITY UPGRADE. THEY ATTACH CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO THIS ACTIVITY. BASED ON SATISFACTORY IF SLOW PERFORMANCE TO DATE, EMBASSY PERCEIVES NO REASON TO DELAY ISSUANCE OF REACTOR EXPORT LICENSE. HOWEVER, PRIOR TO APPROVAL OF FUEL LICENSE WE WOULD LIKE TO EXAMINE THE SITE AGAIN TO ASSURE ERDA TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN ACTED UPON FULLY. IT MIGHT BE USEFUL AT SOME JUNCTURE FOR ERDA TEAM TO AGAIN VISIT SITE POSSIBLY IN NEW BUDGET YEAR AFTER OCTOBER 1977. WITHHOLDING OF FUEL PERMIT SHOULD COMPLIANCE NOT MEET DESIRED STANDARDS COULD PROVIDE LEVERAGE TO ASSURE MORE RAPID RTG ACTION.

5. NO FURTHER INDICATIONS OF RTG THINKING ON NUCLEAR WEAPONRY HAVE BEEN NOTED SINCE REMARKS MADE IN PARA 8, REFTEL E. THANAT IS AN INFLUENTIAL THAI BUT DOES NOT RPT NOT HOLD A GOVERNMENT POST IN THE RTG BUT HAS INFLUENCE AS A RESPECTED SENIOR THAI STATESMAN. HE IS CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM ASSEMBLY. HOWEVER, THAILAND APPEARS TO BE VERY FAR FROM DOING ANYTHING ABOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS AT THIS POINT IN TIME AND POSSESSES NEITHER THE EXPERTISE NOR THE INDUSTRIAL CAPABILITY TO DEVELOP NUCLEAR WEAPONS. IN THE EVENT OF A SERIOUS THREAT TO THAILAND'S INDEPENDENCE FROM ONE OF ITS COMMUNIST NEIGHBORS, THAILAND IS LIKELY TO LOOK FIRST TO THE U.S. TO ASSIST IT, AS PROVIDED FOR IN THE MANILA PACT AS INTERPRETED BY THE RUSK-THANAT AGREEMENT OF 1962.

WHITEHOUSE

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